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AMERICAN CLASSICS FOR SCHOOLS



* LONGFELLOW *



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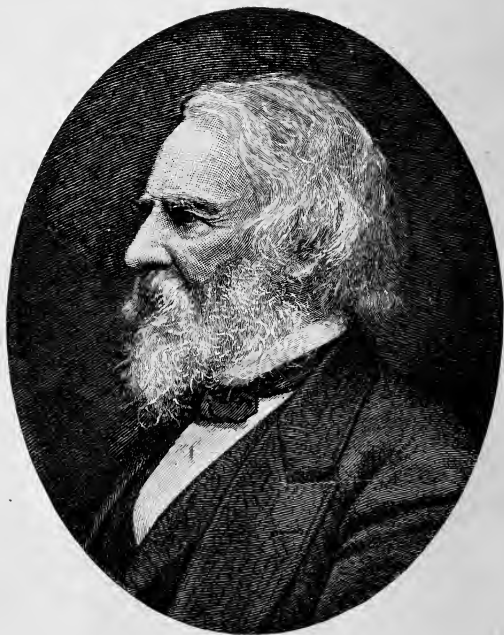
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

Per. 22









Henry W. Longfellow

American Classics for Schools

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"LONGFELLOW



BOSTON

HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN AND COMPANY

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PREFACE.

THE series of *American Classics for Schools* is prepared with a regard for the needs of pupils who have learned to read with some ease, but are not yet expected to study literature; it is meant for the children of the common school. The first use to which a child's power of reading should be put is that of obtaining a familiarity with those forms of pure literature which come within the range of its mind, and it is every way right and desirable that pure literature of American origin should be preferred for American children. This, the finest expression of our life, has the highest value in the education of those who are to be American citizens. There are venerable authors, and there are those no longer living, whose works have passed into a se-

cure place in the world's literature, and it is from these that a collection should be made, which may offer a foundation for a knowledge and love of good letters.

In making selections from each author it is the aim to choose those poems, sketches, or stories which are simplest in form, most direct in narrative, and most elementary in feeling. It is not meant that the writing is always about children, or expressly prepared for them; on the contrary, poems about children which appeal primarily to a mature interest in children are omitted, and the only questions asked in the selection are, Is it intelligible to children? is it interesting to them? is it noble and worthy? The child who makes the acquaintance of an author through these pages will have read those parts which a judicious parent or teacher would first select if reading aloud the complete works; and it is hoped that a taste formed upon these writings will afterward demand the productions which attract the more mature mind.

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HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW.

A VISITOR to Cambridge, in Massachusetts, is very sure to make his first question, Where is Mr. Longfellow's house? and any one whom he meets will be able to give the answer. The ample, dignified mansion, built in Colonial days, and famous as the headquarters of Washington during the first year of the War for Independence, is in the midst of broad fields, and looks across meadows to the winding Charles and the gentle hills beyond. Great elms, fragrant lilacs and syringas, stand by the path which leads to the door; and as one passes along the street, he may often catch a glimpse of the poet pacing up and down the shaded veranda which is screened by the shrubbery.

Here came, in the summer of 1837, a slight, studious-looking young man, who lifted the heavy brass knocker, which hung then as it does now upon the front door, and very likely thought of the great general as he let it fall with a clang. He had called to see the owner of the house, Mrs. Andrew Craigie, widow of the apothecary-general of the Continental Army in the Revolution. The visitor asked if there was a room in her house which he could occupy. The stately old lady, looking all the more dignified for the turban which was wound about her head, answered, as she looked at the youthful figure, —

“I no longer lodge students.”

“But I am not a student; I am a professor in the University.”

“A professor?” She looked curiously at one so like most students in appearance.

“I am Professor Longfellow,” he said.

“Ah! that is different. I will show you what there is. She led him up the broad staircase, and, proud of her house, opened one spacious room after another, only to close the door of each, saying, “You cannot have that,” until at length she led him into the southeast corner-room of the second story. “This was General Washington’s chamber,” she said. “You may have this;” and here he gladly set up his home. The house was a large one, and already Edward Everett and Jared Sparks had lived here. Mr. Sparks

was engaged, singularly enough, upon the Life and Writings of Washington in the very house which Washington had occupied. Afterwards, when Mr. Longfellow was keeping house here, Mr. Joseph E. Worcester, the maker of the dictionary, shared it with him, for there was room for each family to keep a separate establishment, and even a third could have found independent quarters. When Mrs. Craigie died Mr. Longfellow bought the house, and it has remained his ever since.

When he came to Cambridge to be Professor of Modern Languages and Literature in Harvard College he was thirty years old. He was but eighteen when he graduated at Bowdoin College, in the class to which Nathaniel Hawthorne also belonged, and he had given such promise that he was almost immediately called to be professor at Bowdoin. He accepted the appointment on condition that he might have three years of travel and study in Europe. The immediate result of his life abroad was in some translations, chiefly from the Spanish, in some critical papers, and in *Outre Mer* [Over Seas], his first prose work. He continued at Bowdoin until 1835, when he was invited to Harvard. Again he went to Europe for further study and travel, and after his return spent seventeen years as professor.

Two years after he had begun to teach in Harvard College he published *Hyperion, a Ro-*

mance. Hyperion, in classic mythology, is the child of heaven and earth, and in this romance the story is told of a young man who had earthly sorrows and fortunes, but heavenly desires and hopes. It contains many delightful legends and fancies which travel and student life in Europe had brought to the poet's knowledge, and which he had brought back to his countrymen in America. Once afterward, in 1849, he published a romance of New England, *Kavanagh*; but in the same year that saw *Hyperion* there appeared a thin volume of poems entitled *Voices of the Night*; and after that Mr. Longfellow continued to publish volumes of poetry, sometimes a book being devoted to a single poem, as *Evangeline*, or *The Courtship of Miles Standish*, or *Hiawatha*, more often containing a collection of shorter poems, and sometimes, as in the *Tales of a Wayside Inn*, a number of poems pleasantly woven into a story in verse.

The house in which Mr. Longfellow lives is full of suggestion of his work. "The study," as some one has said, "is a busy literary man's workshop: the table is piled with pamphlets and papers in orderly confusion; a high desk in one corner suggests a practice of standing while writing, and gives a hint of one secret of the poet's singularly erect form at an age when the body generally begins to stoop and the shoulders to grow round; an orange-tree stands in one win-

dow ; near it a stuffed stork keeps watch ; on the table is Coleridge's ink-stand ; upon the walls are crayon likenesses of Emerson, Hawthorne, and Sumner." Here, too, is the chair made from the wood of the spreading chestnut-tree under which the village smithy stood, and given to the poet by the children of Cambridge ; here is the pen presented by "beautiful Helen of Maine," the old Danish song-book and the antique pitcher ; upon the staircase is the old clock, which

"Points and beckons with its hands ;"

one looks out from the chamber windows across the meadows upon the gentle Charles, —

"Friends I love have dwelt beside thee,
And have made thy margin dear ;"

following the river one sees the trees and chimneys of Elmwood, and perhaps a flight of

"herons winging their way
O'er the poet's house in the Elmwood thickets ;"

while farther still one catches sight of the white tower of Mount Auburn and thinks of the graves there to which so many of the poet's friends have been borne. It would be a pleasant task to read closely in Mr. Longfellow's poems and discover all the kind words which he has written of his friends. A man is known by the company he keeps. How fine must be that nature which gathers into immortal verse the friendship of Agassiz, Hawthorne, Lowell, Sumner, Whittier,

Tennyson, Irving ; and chooses for companionship among the dead such names as Chaucer, Dante, Keats, Milton, Shakespeare. All these names, and more, will be found strung as beads upon the golden thread of Longfellow's verse.

After all, the old house where the poet lives is most closely connected with his poems, because it is a home. Here his children have grown, and out of its chambers have issued those undying poems which sing the deep life of the fireside. In *The Golden Mile-Stone* he sings : —

“Each man's chimney is his Golden Mile-Stone ;
Is the central point, from which he measures
Every distance
Through the gateways of the world around him ;”

and the secret of Mr. Longfellow's power is in the perfect art with which he has brought all the treasures of the old world stories, and all the hopes of the new, to this central point ; his own fireside has fed the flames of poetic genius, and kept them burning steadily and purely.

Mr. Longfellow was born in Portland, Maine, in 1807, and his birthday is celebrated each year on the 27th of February.

AMERICAN CLASSICS FOR SCHOOLS.

LONGFELLOW.

THE CHILDREN'S HOUR.

BETWEEN the dark and the daylight,
When the night is beginning to lower,
Comes a pause in the day's occupations,
That is known as the Children's Hour.

I hear in the chamber above me
The patter of little feet,
The sound of a door that is opened,
And voices soft and sweet.

From my study I see in the lamplight,
Descending the broad hall stair,
Grave Alice, and laughing Allegra,
And Edith with golden hair.

A whisper, and then a silence :
Yet I know by their merry eyes,
They are plotting and planning together
To take me by surprise.

A sudden rush from the stairway,
A sudden raid from the hall !
By three doors left unguarded,
They enter my castle wall !

They climb up into my turret,
O'er the arms and back of my chair ;
If I try to escape, they surround me ;
They seem to be everywhere.

They almost devour me with kisses,
Their arms about me entwine,
Till I think of the Bishop of Bingen ¹
In his Mouse-Tower on the Rhine !

Do you think, O blue-eyed banditti,²
Because you have scaled the wall,
Such an old moustache ³ as I am
Is not a match for you all ?

I have you fast in my fortress,
And will not let you depart,
But put you down into the dungeon
In the round-tower of my heart.

¹ Near Bingen on the Rhine is a little square Mouse-Tower, so called from an old word meaning toll, since it was used as a toll-house ; but there is an old tradition that a certain Bishop Hatto, who had been cruel to the people, was attacked in the tower by a great army of rats and mice. See Southey's famous poem, Bishop Hatto.

² An Italian word for bands of robbers.

³ A translation of the French phrase *vieux moustache*, which is used of a veteran soldier.

And there will I keep you forever,
Yes, forever and a day,
Till the walls shall crumble to ruin,
And moulder in dust away !

THE WINDMILL.

BEHOLD ! a giant am I !
Aloft here in my tower,
With my granite jaws I devour
The maize, and the wheat, and the rye,
And grind them into flour.

I look down over the farms ;
In the fields of grain I see
The harvest that is to be,
And I fling to the air my arms,
For I know it is all for me.

I hear the sound of flails
Far off, from the threshing-floors
In barns, with their open doors,
And the wind, the wind in my sails,
Louder and louder roars.

I stand here in my place,
With my foot on the rock below,
And whichever way it may blow
I meet it face to face,
As a brave man meets his foe.

And while we wrestle and strive
My master, the miller, stands
And feeds me with his hands ;
For he knows who makes him thrive,
Who makes him lord of lands.

On Sundays I take my rest ;
Church-going bells begin
Their low, melodious din ;
I cross my arms on my breast,
And all is peace within.

MAIDEN AND WEATHERCOCK.

MAIDEN.

O WEATHERCOCK on the village spire,
With your golden feathers all on fire,
Tell me, what can you see from your perch
Above there over the tower of the church ?

WEATHERCOCK.

I can see the roofs and the streets below,
And the people moving to and fro,
And beyond, without either roof or street,
The great salt sea, and the fisherman's fleet.

I can see a ship come sailing in
Beyond the headlands and harbor of Lynn,
And a young man standing on the deck,
With a silken kerchief round his neck.

Now he is pressing it to his lips,
And now he is kissing his finger-tips,
And now he is lifting and waving his hand,
And blowing the kisses toward the land.

MAIDEN.

Ah, that is the ship from over the sea,
That is bringing my lover back to me,
Bringing my lover so fond and true,
Who does not change with the wind like you.

WEATHERCOCK.

If I change with all the winds that blow,
It is only because they made me so,
And people would think it wondrous strange,
If I, a Weathercock, should not change.

O pretty Maiden, so fine and fair,
With your dreamy eyes and your golden hair,
When you and your lover meet to-day
You will thank me for looking some other way.

THE VILLAGE BLACKSMITH.

UNDER a spreading chestnut-tree ¹
The village smithy stands ;

¹ The spreading horse-chestnut-tree and the smithy beneath it stood in Brattle Street, near Story Street, Cambridge. The smithy disappeared several years ago, and the tree was cut down in 1876, because it was claimed

The smith, a mighty man is he,
With large and sinewy hands ;
And the muscles of his brawny arms
Are strong as iron bands.

His hair is crisp, and black, and long,
His face is like the tan ;
His brow is wet with honest sweat,
He earns whate'er he can,
And looks the whole world in the face,
For he owes not any man.

Week in, week out, from morn till night,
You can hear his bellows blow ;
You can hear him swing his heavy sledge,
With measured beat and slow,
Like a sexton ringing the village bell,
When the evening sun is low.

And children coming home from school
Look in at the open door ;
They love to see the flaming forge,
And hear the bellows roar,
And watch the burning sparks that fly
Like chaff from a threshing-floor.

He goes on Sunday to the church,
And sits among his boys ;

that its low branches endangered drivers upon high loads passing beneath it. A chair was afterward made from some of the wood of the tree and given to Mr. Longfellow. See his poem in this volume, page 20.

He hears the parson pray and preach,
He hears his daughter's voice,
Singing in the village choir,
And it makes his heart rejoice.

It sounds to him like her mother's voice,
Singing in Paradise !
He needs must think of her once more,
How in the grave she lies ;
And with his hard, rough hand he wipes
A tear out of his eyes.

Toiling, — rejoicing, — sorrowing,
Onward through life he goes ;
Each morning sees some task begun,
Each evening sees it close ;
Something attempted, something done,
Has earned a night's repose.

Thanks, thanks to thee, my worthy friend,
For the lesson¹ thou hast taught !
Thus at the flaming forge of life
Our fortunes must be wrought ;
Thus on its sounding anvil shaped
Each burning deed and thought.

¹ Involved in the poem is the thought of the twofold life of man, — toiling at work, listening to a voice from Heaven.

FROM MY ARM-CHAIR.

TO THE CHILDREN OF CAMBRIDGE,

Who presented to me, on my Seventy-second Birthday,
February 27, 1879, this Chair made from the Wood of
the Village Blacksmith's Chestnut-Tree.

AM I a king, that I should call my own
This splendid ebon throne?
Or by what reason, or what right divine,¹
Can I proclaim it mine?

Only, perhaps, by right divine of song
It may to me belong;
Only because the spreading chestnut-tree²
Of old was sung by me.

Well I remember it in all its prime,
When in the summer-time

¹ The divine right of kings is a term which was used originally to express a belief that kings held their office by an authority derived directly from God; it was the wilful misinterpretation of this doctrine into a claim that they were therefore at liberty to do as they pleased with people and property, which led to the downfall of the feudal monarchy in England under the Stuart kings, and the substitution, finally, of a constitutional monarchy, in which the head of the kingdom, while ruling by the grace of God, is subject to the will of the people as expressed in the laws which their parliament makes.

² See the poem of *The Village Blacksmith*, in this volume, page 17.



“ Am I a king, that I should call my own
This splendid ebon throne ?”

My Arm Chair.



The affluent foliage of its branches made
A cavern of cool shade.

There, by the blacksmith's forge, beside the street,
Its blossoms white and sweet
Enticed the bees, until it seemed alive,
And murmured like a hive.

And when the winds of autumn, with a shout,
Tossed its great arms about,
The shining chestnuts, bursting from the sheath,
Dropped to the ground beneath.

And now some fragments of its branches bare,
Shaped as a stately chair,
Have by my hearthstone found a home at last,
And whisper of the past.

The Danish king could not in all his pride
Repel the ocean tide,¹
But, seated in this chair, I can in rhyme
Roll back the tide of Time.

¹ "King Cnut (Canute) was one day by the sea-shore near Southampton, and when some of the men who were with him spoke of his power and greatness, he bade a chair to be placed close to the water's edge. Then said Cnut, 'O sea, I am thy lord; my ships sail over thee whither I will, and this land against which thou dashest is mine; stay then thy waves, and dare not to wet the feet of thy lord and master.' But the waves came on, for the tide was now coming in, and they came round the chair on which Cnut was sitting, and they wetted his feet and his clothes. Then spake King Cnut to the men that

I see again, as one in vision sees,
 The blossoms and the bees,
And hear the children's voices shout and call,
 And the brown chestnuts fall.

I see the smithy with its fires aglow,
 I hear the bellows blow,
And the shrill hammers on the anvil beat
 The iron white with heat !

And thus, dear children, have ye made for me
 This day a jubilee,
And to my more than three-score years and ten
 Brought back my youth again.

The heart hath its own memory, like the mind,
 And in it are enshrined
The precious keepsakes, into which is wrought
 The giver's loving thought.

Only your love and your remembrance could
 Give life to this dead wood,
And make these branches, leafless now so long,
 Blossom again in song.

were with him : ' Ye see now how weak is the power of kings and of all men, for ye see that the waves will not hearken to my voice. Honor, then, God only, and serve Him, for Him do all things obey.' " — E. A. FREEMAN'S *Old English History for Children*.

HYMN OF THE MORAVIAN NUNS OF
BETHLEHEM.

AT THE CONSECRATION OF PULASKI'S BANNER.¹

WHEN the dying flame of day
Through the chancel shot its ray,
Far the glimmering tapers shed
Faint light on the cowlèd head ;
And the censer burning swung,
Where, before the altar, hung
The crimson banner, that with prayer
Had been consecrated there.
And the nuns' sweet hymn was heard the
while,
Sung low, in the dim, mysterious aisle.

“Take thy banner ! May it wave
Proudly o'er the good and brave ;
When the battle's distant wail
Breaks the sabbath of our vale,
When the clarion's music thrills
To the hearts of these lone hills,
When the spear in conflict shakes,
And the strong lance shivering breaks.

¹ The Polish Count Pulaski, who served in our army in the Revolution, visited Lafayette when he lay sick at Bethlehem, in Pennsylvania, and he so won upon the regard of the Moravian sisterhood there that they gave him a banner.

“Take thy banner ! and, beneath
The battle-cloud’s encircling wreath,
Guard it, till our homes are free !
Guard it ! God will prosper thee !
In the dark and trying hour,
In the breaking forth of power,
In the rush of steeds and men,
His right hand will shield thee then.

“Take thy banner ! But when night
Closes round the ghastly fight,
If the vanquished warrior bow,
Spare him ! By our holy vow,
By our prayers and many tears,
By the mercy that endears,
Spare him ! he our love hath shared !
Spare him ! as thou wouldst be spared !

“Take thy banner ! and if e’er
Thou shouldst press the soldier’s bier,
And the muffled drum should beat
To the tread of mournful feet,
Then this crimson flag shall be
Martial cloak and shroud for thee.”

The warrior took that banner proud,
And it was his martial cloak and shroud !¹

¹ Pulaski fell at the siege of Savannah.

THE PHANTOM SHIP.

IN Mather's *Magnalia Christi*,¹
Of the old colonial time,
May be found in prose the legend
That is here set down in rhyme.

A ship sailed from New Haven,
And the keen and frosty airs,
That filled her sails at parting,
Were heavy with good men's prayers.

"O Lord! if it be thy pleasure" —
Thus prayed the old divine —
"To bury our friends in the ocean,
Take them, for they are thine!"

But Master Lamberton muttered,
And under his breath said he,
"This ship is so crank and walty²
I fear our grave she will be!"

¹ The whole title of the book is *Magnalia Christi Americana* [Christ's mighty works in America]; or, *The Ecclesiastical History of New England, from its first Planting, in the year 1620, unto the year of our Lord 1698*. It was first published in 1702. The story of the phantom ship is contained in it in the form of a letter from James Pierpont, a New Haven Minister. The letter occurs in Book I., chapter vi., and may also be found in *The Bodleys Afoot*, page 175.

² *Walty*, liable to roll over.

And the ships that came from England,
When the winter months were gone,
Brought no tidings of this vessel
Nor of Master Lamberton.

This put the people to praying
That the Lord would let them hear
What in his greater wisdom
He had done with friends so dear.

And at last their prayers were answered : —
It was in the month of June,
An hour before the sunset
Of a windy afternoon,

When, steadily steering landward,
A ship was seen below,
And they knew it was Lamberton, Master,
Who sailed so long ago.

On she came, with a cloud of canvas,
Right against the wind that blew,
Until the eye could distinguish
The faces of the crew.

Then fell her straining topmasts,
Hanging tangled in the shrouds,
And her sails were loosened and lifted,
And blown away like clouds.

And the masts, with all their rigging,
Fell slowly, one by one,

And the hulk dilated and vanished,
As a sea-mist in the sun !

And the people who saw this marvel
Each said unto his friend,
That this was the mould of their vessel,
And thus her tragic end.

And the pastor of the village
Gave thanks to God in prayer,
That, to quiet their troubled spirits,
He had sent this Ship of Air.

PEGASUS IN POUND.

ONCE into a quiet village,
Without haste and without heed,
In the golden prime of morning,
Strayed the poet's winged steed.¹

It was Autumn, and incessant
Piped the quails from shocks and sheaves,
And, like living coals, the apples
Burned among the withering leaves.

¹ In classic mythology Pegasus was a winged horse belonging to Apollo and the Muses. Thus when a poet wrote, he was said to mount Pegasus and ride ; the horse not only bore him swiftly, and by his canter gave rhythm to the verse, but by his wings bore the rider above the earth.

Loud the clamorous bell was ringing
From its belfry gaunt and grim ;
'T was the daily call to labor,
Not a triumph meant for him.

Not the less he saw the landscape,
In its gleaming vapor veiled ;
Not the less he breathed the odors
That the dying leaves exhaled.

Thus, upon the village common,
By the school-boys he was found ;
And the wise men, in their wisdom,
Put him straightway into pound.

Then the sombre village crier,
Ringing loud his brazen bell,
Wandered down the street proclaiming
There was an estray to sell.

And the curious country people,
Rich and poor, and young and old,
Came in haste to see this wondrous
Winged steed, with mane of gold.

Thus the day passed, and the evening
Fell, with vapors cold and dim ;
But it brought no food nor shelter,
Brought no straw nor stall, for him.

Patiently, and still expectant,
Looked he through the wooden bars,

Saw the moon rise o'er the landscape,
Saw the tranquil, patient stars ;

Till at length the bell at midnight
Sounded from its dark abode,
And, from out a neighboring farm-yard
Loud the cock Alectryon ¹ crowed.

Then, with nostrils wide distended,
Breaking from his iron chain,
And unfolding far his pinions,
To those stars he soared again.

On the morrow, when the village
Woke to all its toil and care,
Lo ! the strange steed had departed,
And they knew not when nor where.

But they found, upon the greensward
Where his struggling hoofs had trod,
Pure and bright, a fountain ² flowing
From the hoof-marks in the sod.

¹ Alectryon, in the old fables, was a youth who had been stationed by Mars to give notice when Apollo, the sun-god, was to appear. The boy fell asleep, and, for punishment, was turned by Mars into a cock, and ever since has remembered his duty and crows when the sun rises.

² The poet Ovid says that, with a blow of his hoof, Pegasus opened the fountain of Hippocrene (horse-spring) on Mount Helicon, and that the Muses used to drink from it. Our poet has turned the pretty story into a fable of wider meaning, by reminding us that poetry, not appreciated by all people, is yet a never-failing source of pleasure in the toiling world.

From that hour, the fount unfailing
Gladdens the whole region round,
Strengthening all who drink its waters,
While it soothes them with its sound.

THE SERMON OF ST. FRANCIS.

UP soared the lark into the air,
A shaft of song, a wingèd prayer,
As if a soul, released from pain,
Were flying back to heaven again.

St. Francis¹ heard ; it was to him
An emblem of the Seraphim ;
The upward motion of the fire,
The light, the heat, the heart's desire.

Around Assisi's convent gate
The birds, God's poor who cannot wait,
From moor and mere and darksome wood
Came flocking for their dole of food.

"O brother birds," St. Francis said,
"Ye come to me and ask for bread,
But not with bread alone to-day
Shall ye be fed and sent away.

¹ St. Francis of Assisi lived in Italy at the end of the twelfth and beginning of the thirteenth century, and was founder of the order of the Franciscans. There are many stories of his intimacy with birds and beasts.

“Ye shall be fed, ye happy birds,
With manna of celestial words ;
Not mine, though mine they seem to be,
Not mine, though they be spoken through me.

“O, doubly are ye bound to praise
The great Creator in your lays ;
He giveth you your plumes of down,
Your crimson hoods, your cloaks of brown.

“He giveth you your wings to fly
And breathe a purer air on high,
And careth for you everywhere,
Who for yourselves so little care !”

With flutter of swift wings and songs
Together rose the feathered throngs,
And singing scattered far apart ;
Deep peace was in St. Francis' heart.

He knew not if the brotherhood
His homily had understood ;
He only knew that to one ear
The meaning of his words was clear.

WALTER VON DER VOGELWEID.

VOGELWEID the Minnesinger,¹
When he left this world of ours,

¹ The Minnesingers were German lyrical poets, who first sang about the middle of the twelfth century ; their

Laid his body in the cloister,
Under Würtzburg's minster towers.

And he gave the monks his treasures,
Gave them all with this behest :
They should feed the birds at noontide
Daily on his place of rest ;

Saying, " From these wandering minstrels
I have learned the art of song ;
Let me now repay the lessons
They have taught so well and long."

Thus the bard of love departed ;
And, fulfilling his desire,
On his tomb the birds were feasted
By the children of the choir.

Day by day, o'er tower and turret,
In foul weather and in fair,
Day by day, in vaster numbers,
Flocked the poets of the air.

On the tree whose heavy branches
Overshadowed all the place,
On the pavement, on the tombstone,
On the poet's sculptured face,

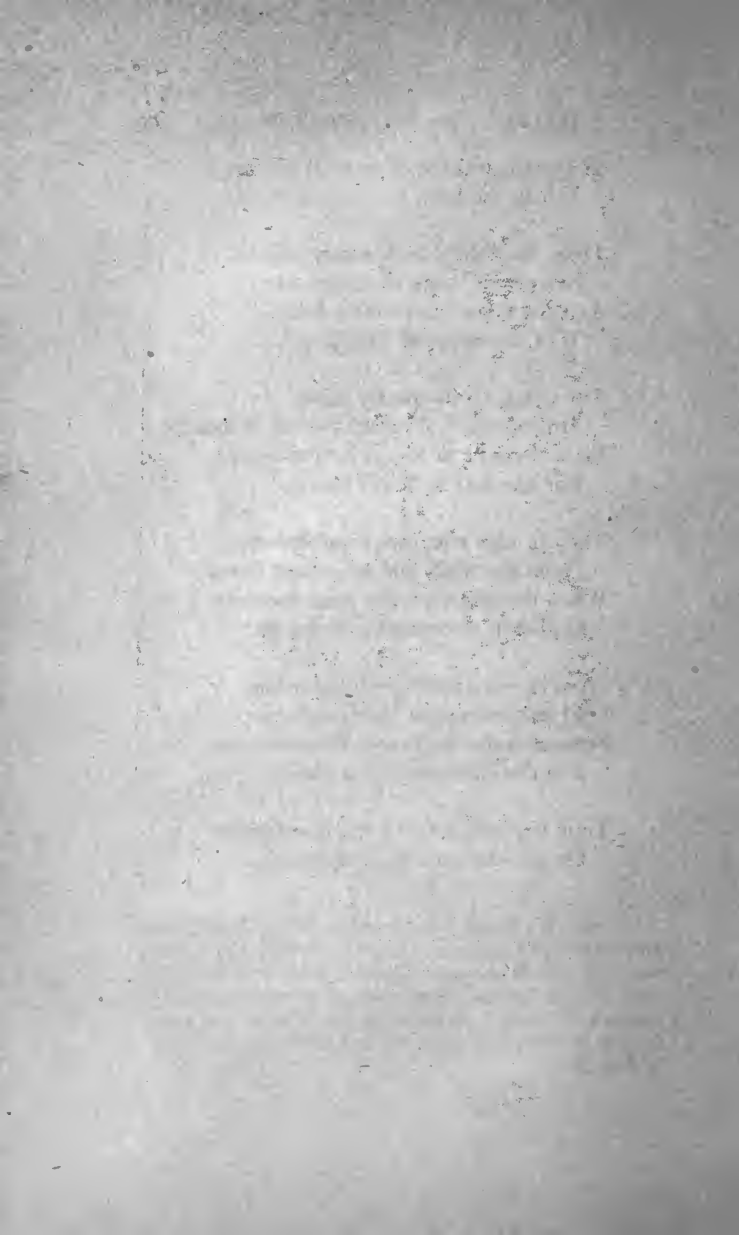
On the cross-bars of each window,
On the lintel of each door,

songs breathed of love and sweetness in woods, meadows,
flowers, grass, rivers, birds, and women, while some had
a religious character.



"On his tomb the birds were feasted
By the children of the choir."

Walter von der Vogelweid.



They renewed the War of Wartburg,¹
Which the bard had fought before.

There they sang their merry carols,
Sang their lauds on every side ;
And the name their voices uttered
Was the name of Vogelweid.

Till at length the portly abbot
Murmured, " Why this waste of food ?
Be it changed to loaves henceforward
For our fasting brotherhood."

Then in vain o'er tower and turret,
From the walls and woodland nests,
When the minster bells rang noontide,
Gathered the unwelcome guests.

Then in vain, with cries discordant,
Clamorous round the Gothic spire,
Screamed the feathered Minnesingers
For the children of the choir.

Time has long effaced the inscriptions
On the cloister's funeral stones,

¹ Castle Wartburg was the residence of Landgrave Herrmann of Thüringen, in Vogelweid's time, and a great resort of the Minnesingers. The *Wartburg Minstrels' War* is the name of a poem which celebrates the singing contests of that day. Long afterward Wartburg became famous as the place where Luther translated the Bible into German.

And tradition only tells us
Where repose the poet's bones.

But around the vast cathedral,
By sweet echoes multiplied,
Still the birds repeat the legend,
And the name of Vogelweid.

THE BELL OF ATRI.

AT Atri in Abruzzo, a small town
Of ancient Roman date, but scant renown,
One of those little places that have run
Half up the hill, beneath a blazing sun,
And then sat down to rest, as if to say,
"I climb no farther upward, come what may," —
The *Re Giovanni*,¹ now unknown to fame,
So many monarchs since have borne the name,
Had a great bell hung in the market-place
Beneath a roof, projecting some small space,
By way of shelter from the sun and rain.
Then rode he through the streets with all his
train,
And, with the blast of trumpets loud and long,
Made proclamation, that whenever wrong
Was done to any man, he should but ring
The great bell in the square, and he, the King,
Would cause the Syndic² to decide thereon.
Such was the proclamation of King John.¹

¹ The Italian and English forms of the same name.

² The magistrate of Atri.

How swift the happy days in Atri sped,
What wrongs were righted need not here be said.
Suffice it that, as all things must decay,
The hempen rope at length was worn away,
Unravell'd at the end, and, strand by strand,
Loosened and wasted in the ringer's hand,
Till one, who noted this in passing by,
Mended the rope with braids of briony,¹
So that the leaves and tendrils of the vine
Hung like a votive garland at a shrine.

By chance it happened that in Atri dwelt
A knight, with spur on heel and sword in belt,
Who loved to hunt the wild-boar in the woods,
Who loved his falcons with their crimson hoods,
Who loved his hounds and horses, and all sports
And prodigalities of camps and courts ;—
Loved, or had loved them ; for at last, grown old,
His only passion was the love of gold.

He sold his horses, sold his hawks and hounds,
Rented his vineyards and his garden-grounds,
Kept but one steed, his favorite steed of all,
To starve and shiver in a naked stall,
And day by day sat brooding in his chair,
Devising plans how best to hoard and spare.

At length he said : " What is the use or need
To keep at my own cost this lazy steed,
Eating his head off in my stables here,
When rents are low and provender is dear ?

¹ Or Bryonia.

Let him go feed upon the public ways ;
I want him only for the holidays.”
So the old steed was turned into the heat
Of the long, lonely, silent, shadeless street ;
And wandered in suburban lanes forlorn,
Barked at by dogs, and torn by brier and thorn.

One afternoon, as in that sultry clime
It is the custom in the summer time,
With bolted doors and window-shutters closed,
The inhabitants of Atri slept or dozed ;
When suddenly upon their senses fell
The loud alarum of the accusing bell !
The Syndic started from his deep repose,
Turned on his couch, and listened, and then rose
And donned his robes, and with reluctant pace
Went panting forth into the market-place,
Where the great bell upon its cross-beam swung
Reiterating with persistent tongue,
In half-articulate jargon, the old song :
“Some one hath done a wrong, hath done a
wrong !”

But ere he reached the belfry's light arcade,
He saw, or thought he saw, beneath its shade,
No shape of human form of woman born,
But a poor steed dejected and forlorn,
Who with uplifted head and eager eye
Was tugging at the vines of briony.
“Domeneddio !” cried the Syndic straight,
“This is the Knight of Atri's steed of state !
He calls for justice, being sore distressed,
And pleads his cause as loudly as the best.”

Meanwhile from street and lane a noisy crowd
Had rolled together like a summer cloud,
And told the story of the wretched beast
In five-and-twenty different ways at least,
With much gesticulation and appeal
To heathen gods, in their excessive zeal.
The Knight was called and questioned ; in reply
Did not confess the fact, did not deny ;
Treated the matter as a pleasant jest,
And set at naught the Syndic and the rest,
Maintaining, in an angry undertone,
That he should do what pleased him with his own.

And thereupon the Syndic gravely read
The proclamation of the King ; then said :
“Pride goeth forth on horseback grand and gay,
But cometh back on foot, and begs its way ;
Fame is the fragrance of heroic deeds,
Of flowers of chivalry and not of weeds !
These are familiar proverbs ; but I fear
They never yet have reached your knightly ear.
What fair renown, what honor, what repute
Can come to you from starving this poor brute ?
He who serves well and speaks not, merits more
Than they who clamor loudest at the door.
Therefore the law decrees that as this steed
Served you in youth, henceforth you shall take
 heed
To comfort his old age, and to provide
Shelter in stall, and food and field beside.”

The Knight withdrew abashed ; the people all
Led home the steed in triumph to his stall.

The King heard and approved, and laughed in
glee,
And cried aloud : " Right well it pleaseth me !
Church-bells at best but ring us to the door ;
But go not in to mass ; my bell doth more :
It cometh into court and pleads the cause
Of creatures dumb and unknown to the laws ;
And this shall make, in every Christian clime,
The Bell of Atri famous for all time."

SIR HUMPHREY GILBERT.

SOUTHWARD with fleet of ice
Sailed the corsair Death ;
Wild and fast blew the blast,
And the east-wind was his breath.

His lordly ships of ice
Glisten in the sun ;
On each side, like pennons wide,
Flashing crystal streamlets run.

His sails of white sea-mist
Dripped with silver rain ;
But where he passed there were cast
Leaden shadows o'er the main.

Eastward from Campobello
Sir Humphrey Gilbert¹ sailed ;

¹ Sir Humphrey Gilbert was half-brother to Sir Walter Raleigh, and came to America as leader of an expe-

Three days or more seaward he bore,
Then, alas ! the land-wind failed.

Alas ! the land-wind failed,
And ice-cold grew the night ;
And nevermore, on sea or shore,
Should Sir Humphrey see the light.

He sat upon the deck,
The Book was in his hand ;
“ Do not fear ! Heaven is as near,”
He said, “ by water as by land ! ”

In the first watch of the night,
Without a signal's sound,
Out of the sea, mysteriously,
The fleet of Death rose all around.

The moon and the evening star
Were hanging in the shrouds ;
Every mast, as it passed,
Seemed to rake the passing clouds.

They grappled with their prize,
At midnight black and cold !

dition in 1583. It was when he was returning to England, after an unsuccessful voyage in search of a silver mine, that he met his death as the poem tells. He was aboard the *Squirrel*, the smallest vessel of his little fleet, — a boat of only ten tons burden. The historian of the expedition tells how the captain of one of the other vessels came near enough to see Sir Humphrey sitting in the stern with his book, and to hear his cheerful words.

As of a rock was the shock ;
Heavily the ground-swell rolled.

Southward through day and dark,
They drift in close embrace,
With mist and rain, o'er the open main ;
Yet there seems no change of place.

Southward, forever southward,
They drift through dark and day ;
And like a dream, in the Gulf-Stream
Sinking, vanish all away.

THE EMPEROR'S BIRD'S-NEST.

ONCE the Emperor Charles of Spain,
With his swarthy, grave commanders,
I forget in what campaign,
Long besieged, in mud and rain,
Some old frontier town of Flanders.

Up and down the dreary camp,
In great boots of Spanish leather,
Striding with a measured tramp,
These Hidalgos, dull and damp,
Cursed the Frenchmen, cursed the weather.

Thus as to and fro they went,
Over upland and through hollow,
Giving their impatience vent,
Perched upon the Emperor's tent,
In her nest, they spied a swallow.

Yes, it was a swallow's nest,
Built of clay and hair of horses,
Mane, or tail, or dragoon's crest,
Found on hedge-rows east and west,
After skirmish of the forces.

Then an old Hidalgo said,
As he twirled his gray mustachio,
"Sure this swallow overhead
Thinks the Emperor's tent a shed,
And the Emperor but a Macho!"¹

Hearing his imperial name
Coupled with those words of malice,
Half in anger, half in shame,
Forth the great campaigner came
Slowly from his canvas palace.

"Let no hand the bird molest,"
- Said he solemnly, "nor hurt her!"
Adding then, by way of jest,
"Golondrina² is my guest,
'T is the wife of some deserter!"

Swift as bowstring speeds a shaft,
Through the camp was spread the rumor,
And the soldiers, as they quaffed
Flemish beer at dinner, laughed
At the Emperor's pleasant humor.

¹ *Macho* is a Spanish word, meaning mule.

² *Golondrina* is the feminine form of *golondrino*, which means a swallow, and is also a cant name for a deserter, as of one who takes flight.

So unharmed and unafraid
Sat the swallow still and brooded,
Till the constant cannonade
Through the walls a breach had made
And the siege was thus concluded.

Then the army, elsewhere bent,
Struck its tents as if disbanding,
Only not the Emperor's tent,
For he ordered, ere he went,
Very curtly, "Leave it standing!"

So it stood there all alone,
Loosely flapping, torn and tattered,
Till the brood was fledged and flown,
Singing o'er those walls of stone
Which the cannon-shot had shattered.

VICTOR GALBRAITH.¹

UNDER the walls of Monterey
At daybreak the bugles begin to play,
Victor Galbraith!
In the midst of the morning damp and gray,
These were the words they seemed to say:

¹ "This poem," says Mr. Longfellow, "is founded on fact. Victor Galbraith was a bugler in a company of volunteer cavalry, and was shot in Mexico for some breach of discipline. It is a common superstition among soldiers, that no balls will kill them unless their names are written on them. The old proverb says, 'Every bullet has its billet.'"

“Come forth to thy death,
Victor Galbraith!”

Forth he came, with a martial tread ;
Firm was his step, erect his head ;
Victor Galbraith,
He who so well the bugle played,
Could not mistake the words it said :
“Come forth to thy death,
Victor Galbraith !”

He looked at the earth, he looked at the sky,
He looked at the files of musketry,
Victor Galbraith !
And he said, with a steady voice and eye,
“Take good aim ; I am ready to die !”
Thus challenges death
Victor Galbraith.

Twelve fiery tongues flashed straight and red,
Six leaden balls on their errand sped ;
Victor Galbraith
Falls to the ground, but he is not dead ;
His name was not stamped on those balls of lead,
And they only scath
Victor Galbraith.

Three balls are in his breast and brain,
But he rises out of the dust again,
Victor Galbraith !
The water he drinks has a bloody stain ;
“O kill me, and put me out of my pain !”

In his agony prayeth
Victor Galbraith.

Forth dart once more those tongues of flame,
And the bugler has died a death of shame,
Victor Galbraith !

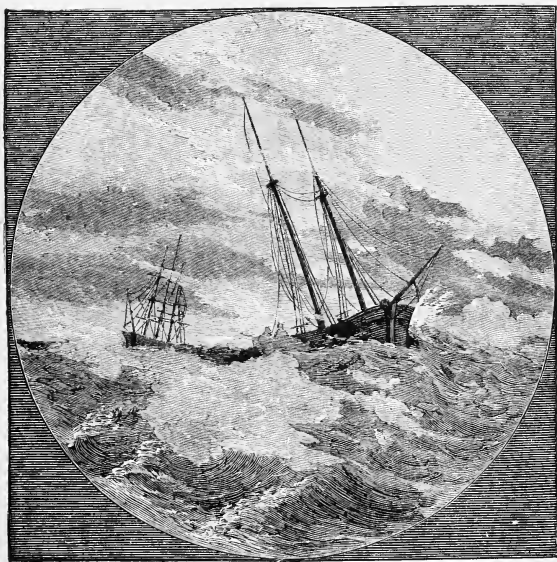
His soul has gone back to whence it came,
And no one answers to the name,
When the Sergeant saith,
“ Victor Galbraith ! ”

Under the walls of Monterey
By night a bugle is heard to play,
Victor Galbraith !
Through the mist of the valley damp and gray
The sentinels hear the sound, and say,
“ That is the wraith
Of Victor Galbraith ! ”

THE ROPEWALK.

IN that building, long and low,
With its windows all a-row,
Like the port-holes of a hulk,
Human spiders spin and spin,
Backward down their threads so thin
Dropping, each a hempen bulk.

At the end, an open door ;
Squares of sunshine on the floor
Light the long and dusky lane ;



“Ships rejoicing in the breeze.”
The Ropewalk.

And the whirring of a wheel,
Dull and drowsy, makes me feel
All its spokes are in my brain.

As the spinners to the end
Downward go and reascend,
Gleam the long threads in the sun ;
While within this brain of mine
Cobwebs brighter and more fine
By the busy wheel are spun.

Two fair maidens in a swing,
Like white doves upon the wing,
First before my vision pass ;
Laughing, as their gentle hands
Closely clasp the twisted strands,
At their shadow on the grass.

Then a booth of mountebanks,
With its smell of tan and planks,
And a girl poised high in air
On a cord, in spangled dress,
With a faded loveliness,
And a weary look of care.

Then a homestead among farms,
And a woman with bare arms
Drawing water from a well ;
As the bucket mounts apace,
With it mounts her own fair face,
As at some magician's spell.

Then an old man in a tower,
Ringing loud the noontide hour,
While the rope coils round and round
Like a serpent at his feet,
And again, in swift retreat,
Nearly lifts him from the ground.

Then within a prison-yard,
Faces fixed, and stern, and hard,
Laughter and indecent mirth ;
Ah ! it is the gallows-tree !
Breath of Christian charity,
Blow, and sweep it from the earth !

Then a school-boy, with his kite
Gleaming in a sky of light,
And an eager, upward look ;
Steeds pursued through lane and field ;
Fowlers with their snares concealed ;
And an angler by a brook.

Ships rejoicing in the breeze,
Wrecks that float o'er unknown seas,
Anchors dragged through faithless sand ;
Sea-fog drifting overhead,
And, with lessening line and lead,
Sailors feeling for the land.

All these scenes do I behold,
These, and many left untold,
In that building long and low ;

While the wheel goes round and round,
With a drowsy, dreamy sound,
And the spinners backward go.

SANTA FILOMENA.¹

WHENE'ER a noble deed is wrought,
Whene'er is spoken a noble thought,
Our hearts, in glad surprise,
To higher levels rise.

The tidal wave of deeper souls
Into our inmost being rolls,
And lifts us unawares
Out of all meaner cares.

Honor to those whose words or deeds
Thus help us in our daily needs,
And by their overflow
Raise us from what is low!

¹ This poem is in honor of Miss Nightingale, an English lady, who won the admiration of Christendom by her devotion to the sick and wounded in the Crimean War of 1854-55, when England and France were fighting Russia. Filomena [Philomena] is the Latin for Nightingale, and by a singular fortune there is a Saint Filomena whose memory is honored, and at Pisa, in Italy, there is a chapel dedicated to her, and over the altar a picture "representing the Saint as a beautiful, nymph-like figure, floating down from heaven attended by two angels bearing the lily, palm, and javelin, and beneath, in the foreground, the sick and maimed, who are healed by her intercession."

Thus thought I, as by night I read
Of the great army of the dead,
The trenches cold and damp,
The starved and frozen camp, —

The wounded from the battle-plain,
In dreary hospitals of pain,
The cheerless corridors,
The cold and stony floors.

Lo! in that house of misery
A lady with a lamp I see
Pass through the glimmering gloom,
And flit from room to room.

And slow, as in a dream of bliss,
The speechless sufferer turns to kiss
Her shadow, as it falls
Upon the darkening walls.

As if a door in heaven should be
Opened and then closed suddenly,
The vision came and went,
The light shone and was spent.

On England's annals, through the long
Hereafter of her speech and song,
That light its rays shall cast
From portals of the past.

A Lady with a Lamp shall stand
In the great history of the land,

A noble type of good,
Heroic womanhood.

Nor even shall be wanting here
The palm, the lily, and the spear,
The symbols that of yore
Saint Filomena bore.

THE THREE KINGS.

THREE Kings came riding from far away,
Melchior and Gaspar and Baltasar; ¹
Three Wise Men out of the East were they,
And they travelled by night and they slept by
day,
For their guide was a beautiful, wonderful
star.

The star was so beautiful, large, and clear,
That all the other stars of the sky
Became a white mist in the atmosphere,
And by this they knew that the coming was near
Of the Prince foretold in the prophecy.

Three caskets they bore on their saddle-bows,
Three caskets of gold with golden keys ;
Their robes were of crimson silk with rows
Of bells and pomegranates and furbelows,
Their turbans like blossoming almond-trees.

¹ So, according to old tradition, were the Kings or
Wise Men of the East named.

And so the Three Kings rode into the West,
Through the dusk of night, over hill and dell,
And sometimes they nodded with beard on breast,
And sometimes talked, as they paused to rest,
With the people they met at some wayside
well.

“Of the child that is born,” said Baltasar,
“Good people, I pray you, tell us the news ;
For we in the East have seen his star,
And have ridden fast, and have ridden far,
To find and worship the King of the Jews.”

And the people answered, “You ask in vain ;
We know of no king but Herod the Great ! ”
They thought the Wise Men were men insane,
As they spurred their horses across the plain,
Like riders in haste, and who cannot wait.

And when they came to Jerusalem,
Herod the Great, who had heard this thing,
Sent for the Wise Men and questioned them ;
And said, “Go down unto Bethlehem,
And bring me tidings of this new king.”

So they rode away ; and the star stood still,
The only one in the gray of morn ;
Yes, it stopped, it stood still of its own free will,
Right over Bethlehem on the hill,
The city of David where Christ was born.

And the Three Kings rode through the gate and
the guard,

Through the silent street, till their horses
turned

And neighed as they entered the great inn-yard ;
But the windows were closed, and the doors were
barred,

And only a light in the stable burned.

And cradled there in the scented hay,

In the air made sweet by the breath of kine,
The little child in the manger lay,
The child, that would be king one day
Of a kingdom not human but divine.

His mother Mary of Nazareth

Sat watching beside his place of rest,
Watching the even flow of his breath,
For the joy of life and the terror of death
Were mingled together in her breast.

They laid their offerings at his feet :

The gold was their tribute to a King,
The frankincense, with its odor sweet,
Was for the Priest, the Paraclete,¹
The myrrh for the body's burying.

And the mother wondered and bowed her head,
And sat as still as a statue of stone ;

¹ The Paraclete is the Greek for Comforter, the name by which the Holy Spirit is sometimes called in the New Testament.

Her heart was troubled yet comforted,
Remembering what the Angel had said
Of an endless reign and of David's throne.

Then the Kings rode out of the city gate,
With a clatter of hoofs in proud array;
But they went not back to Herod the Great,
For they knew his malice and feared his hate,
And returned to their homes by another way.

THE CASTLE BY THE SEA.¹

FROM THE GERMAN OF UHLAND.²

"HAST thou seen that lordly castle,
That Castle by the Sea?
Golden and red above it
The clouds float gorgeously.

"And fain it would stoop downward
To the mirrored wave below;
And fain it would soar upward
In the evening's crimson glow."

"Well have I seen that castle,
That Castle by the Sea,

¹ The quotation marks will help the reader to see that the poem is a dialogue between one who knew only of the coming marriage of a princess, and one who knew of the calamity which had interrupted the marriage.

² Uhland was a German poet, who was born in 1787 and died in 1862.



“Hast thou seen that lordly castle,
That castle by the sea?”

The Castle by the Sea.

And the moon above it standing,
And the mist rise solemnly."

"The winds and the waves of ocean,
Had they a merry chime?
Didst thou hear, from those lofty chambers,
The harp and the minstrel's rhyme!"

"The winds and the waves of ocean,
They rested quietly,
But I heard on the gale a sound of wail,
And tears came to mine eye."

"And sawest thou on the turrets
The King and his royal bride?
And the wave of their crimson mantles?
And the golden crown of pride?"

"Led they not forth, in rapture,
A beauteous maiden there?
Resplendent as the morning sun,
Beaming with golden hair?"

"Well saw I the ancient parents,
Without the crown of pride;
They were moving slow, in weeds of woe,
No maiden was by their side!"

THE FIFTIETH BIRTHDAY OF AGASSIZ.¹

MAY 28, 1857.

It was fifty years ago
In the pleasant month of May,
In the beautiful Pays de Vaud,
A child in its cradle lay.

And Nature, the old nurse, took
The child upon her knee,
Saying: "Here is a story-book
Thy Father has written for thee."

"Come, wander with me," she said,
"Into regions yet untrod;
And read what is still unread
In the manuscripts of God."

And he wandered away and away
With Nature, the dear old nurse,
Who sang to him night and day
The rhymes of the universe.

And whenever the way seemed long,
Or his heart began to fail,
She would sing a more wonderful song,
Or tell a more marvellous tale.

¹ Louis John Rudolph Agassiz, the great naturalist and teacher, was born in Switzerland, May 28, 1807, and died at Cambridge, Massachusetts, December 14, 1873.

So she keeps him still a child,
And will not let him go,
Though at times his heart beats wild
For the beautiful Pays de Vaud ;

Though at times he hears in his dreams
The Ranz des Vaches¹ of old,
And the rush of mountain streams
From glaciers clear and cold ;

And the mother at home says, "Hark !
For his voice I listen and yearn ;
It is growing late and dark,
And my boy does not return !"

MAIDENHOOD.

MAIDEN ! with the meek, brown eyes,
In whose orbs a shadow lies
Like the dusk in evening skies !

Thou whose locks outshine the sun,
Golden tresses, wreathed in one,
As the braided streamlets run !

Standing, with reluctant feet,
Where the brook and river meet,
Womanhood and childhood fleet !

¹ A melody played by the Swiss mountaineers on the Alphorn, when leading the cows to pasture, or calling them home.

Gazing, with a timid glance,
On the brooklet's swift advance,
On the river's broad expanse !

Deep and still, that gliding stream
Beautiful to thee must seem,
As the river of a dream.

Then why pause with indecision,
When bright angels in thy vision
Beckon thee to fields Elysian ? ¹

Seest thou shadows sailing by,
As the dove, with startled eye,
Sees the falcon's shadow fly ?

Hearest thou voices on the shore,
That our ears perceive no more,
Deafened by the cataract's roar ?

O, thou child of many prayers !
Life hath quicksands, — Life hath snares !
Care and age come unawares !

Like the swell of some sweet tune,
Morning rises into noon,
May glides onward into June.

¹ The Elysian fields were to the Roman the heavenly land beyond the river of death, and the poet here imagines them as the happy womanhood to which the maiden is looking forward, as she stands just ready to put her childish life behind her.

Childhood is the bough, where slumbered
Birds and blossoms many-numbered ; —
Age, that bough with snows encumbered.

Gather, then, each flower that grows,
When the young heart overflows,
To embalm that tent of snows.

Bear a lily in thy hand ;
Gates of brass cannot withstand
One touch of that magic wand.

Bear through sorrow, wrong, and ruth,
In thy heart the dew of youth,
On thy lips the smile of truth.

O, that dew, like balm, shall steal
Into wounds that cannot heal,
Even as sleep our eyes doth seal ;

And that smile, like sunshine, dart
Into many a sunless heart,
For a smile of God thou art.

THE POET AND HIS SONGS.

As the birds come in the Spring,
We know not from where ;
As the stars come at evening
From depths of the air ;

As the rain comes from the cloud,
And the brook from the ground ;
As suddenly, low or loud,
Out of silence a sound ;

As the grape comes to the vine,
The fruit to the tree ;
As the wind comes to the pine,
And the tide to the sea ;

As come the white sails of ships
O'er the ocean's verge ;
As comes the smile to the lips,
The foam to the surge ;

So come to the Poet his songs,
All hitherward blown
From the misty realm, that belongs
To the vast Unknown.

His, and not his, are the lays
He sings ; and their fame
Is his, and not his ; and the praise
And the pride of a name.

For voices pursue him by day,
And haunt him by night,
And he listens, and needs must obey,
When the Angel says : " Write ! " ¹

¹ In the Revelation of St. John the Divine, the evangelist and seer repeatedly declares that what he sets down is at the bidding of the Angel of the Lord ; so the poet obeys a voice which comes from above.

THE SKELETON IN ARMOR.¹

“SPEAK ! speak ! thou fearful guest !
Who, with thy hollow breast
Still in rude armor drest,
Comest to daunt me !
Wrapt not in Eastern balms,²
But with thy fleshless palms
Stretched, as if asking alms,
Why dost thou haunt me ? ”

Then, from those cavernous eyes
Pale flashes seemed to rise,
As when the Northern skies
Gleam in December ;

¹ “ This ballad was suggested to me,” says Mr. Longfellow, “ while riding on the sea-shore at Newport. A year or two previous a skeleton had been dug up at Fall River, clad in broken and corroded armor ; and the idea occurred to me of connecting it with the Round Tower at Newport, generally known hitherto as the Old Windmill, though now claimed by the Danes as a work of their early ancestors.” It is generally conceded now that the Norsemen had nothing to do with the old mill at Newport, which is a close copy of one standing at Chesterton, in Warwickshire, England. The destruction of the armor shortly after it was found has prevented any trustworthy examination of it, to see if it was really Scandinavian or only Indian. The poet sings as one haunted by the skeleton, and able to call out its voice.

² This old warrior was not embalmed as an Egyptian mummy.

And, like the water's flow
Under December's snow,
Came a dull voice of woe
From the heart's chamber.

"I was a Viking¹ old !
My deeds, though manifold,
No Skald² in song has told,
No Saga³ taught thee !
Take heed, that in thy verse
Thou dost the tale rehearse,
Else dread a dead man's curse ;
For this I sought thee.

"Far in the Northern Land,
By the wild Baltic's strand,
I, with my childish hand,
Tamed the gerfalcon ;
And, with my skates fast-bound,
Skimmed the half-frozen Sound,
That the poor whimpering hound
Trembled to walk on.

¹ The Vik-ings took their name from an old Norse word, *vik*, still used in Norway, signifying creek, because these sea-pirates made their haunts among the indentations of the coast, and sallied out thence in search of booty.

² The Skald was the Norse chronicler and poet who sang of brave deeds at the feasts of the warriors.

³ The Saga was the *saying* or chronicle of the heroic deeds. There are many of these old sagas still preserved in Northern literature.

“Oft to his frozen lair
Tracked I the grisly bear,
While from my path the hare
Fled like a shadow ;
Oft through the forest dark
Followed the were-wolf’s ¹ bark,
Until the soaring lark
Sang from the meadow.

“But when I older grew,
Joining a corsair’s crew,
O’er the dark sea I flew
With the marauders.
Wild was the life we led ;
Many the souls that sped,
Many the hearts that bled,
By our stern orders.

“Many a wassail-bout
Wore the long winter out ;
Often our midnight shout
Set the cocks crowing,
As we the Berserk’s ² tale

¹ In the fables of Northern Europe there were said to be men who could change themselves into wolves at pleasure, and they were called were-wolves.

² There was a famous warrior in the fabulous history of Norway who went into battle bare of armor (*ber* — bare ; *særke* — a shirt of mail), but possessed of a terrible rage ; he had twelve sons like himself, who were also called Berserks or Berserkers, and the phrase Berserker rage has come into use to express a terrible fury which makes a man fearless and strong.

Measured in cups of ale,
Draining the oaken pail,
Filled to o'erflowing.

“Once as I told in glee
Tales of the stormy sea,
Soft eyes did gaze on me,
Burning, yet tender;
And as the white stars shine
On the dark Norway pine,
On that dark heart of mine
Fell their soft splendor.

“I wooed the blue-eyed maid,
Yielding, yet half afraid,
And in the forest's shade
Our vows were plighted.
Under its loosened vest
Fluttered her little breast,
Like birds within their nest
By the hawk frightened.

“Bright in her father's hall
Shields gleamed upon the wall,
Loud sang the minstrels all,
Chanting his glory;
When of old Hildebrand
I asked his daughter's hand,
Mute did the minstrels stand
To hear my story.

“While the brown ale he quaffed,
Loud then the champion laughed,

And as the wind-gusts waft
The sea-foam brightly,
So the loud laugh of scorn,
Out of those lips unshorn,
From the deep drinking-horn
Blew the foam lightly.

“She was a Prince’s child,
I but a Viking wild,
And though she blushed and smiled,
I was discarded !
Should not the dove so white
Follow the sea-mew’s flight,
Why did they leave that night
Her nest unguarded ?

“Scarce had I put to sea,
Bearing the maid with me,
Fairest of all was she
Among the Norsemen !
When on the white sea-strand,
Waving his armed hand,
Saw we old Hildebrand,
With twenty horsemen.

“Then launched they to the blast,
Bent like a reed each mast,
Yet we were gaining fast,
When the wind failed us ;
And with a sudden flaw
Came round the gusty Skaw,
So that our foe we saw
Laugh as he hailed us.

“ And as to catch the gale
Round veered the flapping sail,
Death ! was the helmsman’s hail,
 Death without quarter !
Mid-ships with iron keel
Struck we her ribs of steel ;
Down her black hulk did reel
 Through the black water !

“ As with his wings aslant,
Sails the fierce cormorant,
Seeking some rocky haunt,
 With his prey laden,
So toward the open main,
Beating to sea again,
Through the wild hurricane,
 Bore I the maiden.

“ Three weeks we westward bore,
And when the storm was o’er,
Cloud-like we saw the shore
 Stretching to leeward ;
There for my lady’s bower
Built I the lofty tower,
Which, to this very hour,
 Stands looking seaward.

“ There lived we many years ;
Time dried the maiden’s tears ;
She had forgot her fears,
 She was a mother ;
Death closed her mild blue eyes ;



"I, with my childish hand,
Tamed the gerfalcon."
The Skeleton in Armor.



Under that tower she lies ;
Ne'er shall the sun arise
On such another !

"Still grew my bosom then,
Still as a stagnant fen !
Hateful to me were men,
The sunlight hateful !
In the vast forest here,
Clad in my warlike gear,
Fell I upon my spear,
O, death was grateful !

"Thus, seamed with many scars,
Bursting these prison bars,
Up to its native stars
My soul ascended !
There from the flowing bowl
Deep drinks the warrior's soul,
*Skoal !*¹ to the Northland ! *skaal !*"
Thus the tale ended.

THE WRECK OF THE HESPERUS.

It was the schooner Hesperus,
That sailed the wintry sea ;

¹ "In Scandinavia," says Mr. Longfellow, "this is the customary salutation when drinking a health. I have slightly changed the orthography of the word [skaal] in order to preserve the correct pronunciation."

And the skipper had taken his little daughtèr,
To bear him company.

Blue were her eyes as the fairy-flax;
Her cheeks like the dawn of day,
And her bosom white as the hawthorn buds,
That ope in the month of May.

The skipper he stood beside the helm,
His pipe was in his mouth,
And he watched how the veering flaw did blow
The smoke now West, now South.

Then up and spake an old Sailòr,
Had sailed to the Spanish Main,¹
“I pray thee, put into yonder port,
For I fear a hurricane.

“Last night, the moon had a golden ring,
And to-night no moon we see ! ”
The skipper, he blew a whiff from his pipe,
And a scornful laugh laughed he.

Colder and louder blew the wind,
A gale from the Northeast,
The snow fell hissing in the brine,
And the billows frothed like yeast.

Down came the storm, and smote amain
The vessel in its strength ;

¹ A name given to the northern coast of South America, after its discovery by the Spaniards.

She shuddered and paused, like a frightened steed,
Then leaped her cable's length.

"Come hither ! come hither ! my little daughtèr,
And do not tremble so ;
For I can weather the roughest gale
That ever wind did blow."

He wrapped her warm in his seaman's coat
Against the stinging blast ;
He cut a rope from a broken spar,
And bound her to the mast.

"O father ! I hear the church-bells ring,
O say, what may it be ?"
"'T is a fog-bell on a rock-bound coast !" —
And he steered for the open sea.

"O father ! I hear the sound of guns,
O say, what may it be ?"
"Some ship in distress, that cannot live
In such an angry sea !"

"O father ! I see a gleaming light,
O say, what may it be ?"
But the father answered never a word,
A frozen corpse was he.

Lashed to the helm, all stiff and stark,
With his face turned to the skies,
The lantern gleamed through the gleaming snow
On his fixed and glassy eyes.

Then the maiden clasped her hands and prayed
That savèd she might be ;
And she thought of Christ, who stilled the wave,
On the Lake of Galilee.

And fast through the midnight dark and drear,
Through the whistling sleet and snow,
Like a sheeted ghost, the vessel swept
Tow'rds the reef of Norman's Woe.¹

And ever the fitful gusts between
A sound came from the land ;
It was the sound of the trampling surf
On the rocks and the hard sea-sand.

The breakers were right beneath her bows,
She drifted a dreary wreck,
And a whooping billow swept the crew
Like icicles from her deck.

She struck where the white and fleecy waves
Looked soft as carded wool,
But the cruel rocks, they gored her side
Like the horns of an angry bull.

Her rattling shrouds, all sheathed in ice,
With the masts went by the board ;

¹ A barren, rocky reef lying off the coast of Cape Ann, in Massachusetts, between Magnolia and Gloucester. The English, in early New England days, sometimes gave the name of *woe* to the scene of marine disaster, as Thatcher's Woe on the same coast, near Ipswich River.

Like a vessel of glass, she stove and sank,
Ho ! ho ! the breakers roared !

At daybreak, on the bleak sea-beach,
A fisherman stood aghast,
To see the form of a maiden fair,
Lashed close to a drifting mast.

The salt sea was frozen on her breast,
The salt tears in her eyes ;
And he saw her hair, like the brown sea-weed,
On the billows fall and rise.

Such was the wreck of the Hesperus,
In the midnight and the snow !
Christ save us all from a death like this,
On the reef of Norman's Woe !

PAUL REVERE'S RIDE.

LISTEN, my children, and you shall hear
Of the midnight ride of Paul Revere,¹
On the eighteenth of April, in Seventy-five ;
Hardly a man is now alive
Who remembers that famous day and year.

¹ Paul Revere was a leader of the Boston mechanics in the early days of the Revolution ; he was himself a worker in the precious metals and copper ; a number of engravings exist which were executed by him ; he rose to be lieutenant-colonel, but his chief fame has come from the exploit which Mr. Longfellow has freely narrated. The ballad makes a slight variation from the actual facts.

He said to his friend, "If the British march
By land or sea from the town to-night,
Hang a lantern aloft in the belfry arch
Of the North Church¹ tower as a signal light,
One, if by land, and two, if by sea ;
And I on the opposite shore will be,
Ready to ride and spread the alarm
Through every Middlesex village and farm,
For the country folk to be up and to arm."

Then he said, "Good-night !" and with muffled
oar

Silently rowed to the Charlestown shore,
Just as the moon rose over the bay,
Where swinging wide at her moorings lay
The Somerset, British man-of-war ;
A phantom ship, with each mast and spar
Across the moon like a prison bar,
And a huge black hulk, that was magnified
By its own reflection in the tide.

Meanwhile, his friend, through alley and street,
Wanders and watches with eager ears,
Till in the silence around him he hears
The muster of men at the barrack door,

¹ There has been a dispute whether the North Church was Christ Church, in Salem Street, Boston, still standing, and commonly called at that time the North Church, or the Old North Church, which stood in North Square, and was taken down by the British for fire-wood, during the siege of Boston, but the weight of testimony inclines to the side of Christ Church, and a tablet commemorating the affair has accordingly been inserted in the wall.

The sound of arms, and the tramp of feet,
And the measured tread of the grenadiers,
Marching down to their boats on the shore.

Then he climbed the tower of the Old North
Church,

By the wooden stairs, with stealthy tread,
To the belfry-chamber overhead,
And startled the pigeons from their perch
On the sombre rafters, that round him made
Masses and moving shapes of shade, —
By the trembling ladder, steep and tall,
To the highest window in the wall,
Where he paused to listen and look down
A moment on the roofs of the town,
And the moonlight flowing over all.

Beneath, in the churchyard, lay the dead,
In their night-encampment on the hill,
Wrapped in silence so deep and still
That he could hear, like a sentinel's tread,
The watchful night-wind, as it went
Creeping along from tent to tent,
And seeming to whisper, "All is well!"
A moment only he feels the spell
Of the place and the hour, and the secret dread
Of the lonely belfry and the dead;
For suddenly all his thoughts are bent
On a shadowy something far away,
Where the river widens to meet the bay, —
A line of black that bends and floats
On the rising tide, like a bridge of boats.

Meanwhile, impatient to mount and ride,
Booted and spurred, with a heavy stride
On the opposite shore walked Paul Revere.
Now he patted his horse's side,
Now gazed at the landscape far and near,
Then, impetuous, stamped the earth,
And turned and tightened his saddle-girth ;
But mostly he watched with eager search
The belfry-tower of the Old North Church,
As it rose above the graves on the hill,
Lonely and spectral and sombre and still.
And lo ! as he looks, on the belfry's height
A glimmer, and then a gleam of light !
He springs to the saddle, the bridle he turns,
But lingers and gazes, till full on his sight
A second lamp in the belfry burns !

A hurry of hoofs in a village street,
A shape in the moonlight, a bulk in the dark,
And beneath, from the pebbles, in passing, a
 spark
Struck out by a steed flying fearless and fleet :
That was all ! And yet, through the gloom and
 the light,
The fate of a nation was riding that night ;
And the spark struck out by that steed, in his
 flight,
Kindled the land into flame with its heat.

He has left the village and mounted the steep,
And beneath him, tranquil and broad and deep,
Is the Mystic, meeting the ocean tides ;





“ And I on the opposite shore will be,
Ready to ride and spread the alarm.”
Paul Revere's Ride.

And under the alders, that skirt its edge,
Now soft on the sand, now loud on the ledge,
Is heard the tramp of his steed as he rides.

It was twelve by the village clock
When he crossed the bridge into Medford town.
He heard the crowing of the cock,
And the barking of the farmer's dog,
And felt the damp of the river fog,
That rises after the sun goes down.

It was one by the village clock,
When he galloped into Lexington.
He saw the gilded weathercock
Swim in the moonlight as he passed,
And the meeting-house windows, blank and bare,
Gaze at him with a spectral glare,
As if they already stood aghast
At the bloody work they would look upon.

It was two by the village clock,
When he came to the bridge in Concord town.
He heard the bleating of the flock,
And the twitter of birds among the trees,
And felt the breath of the morning breeze
Blowing over the meadows brown.
And one was safe and asleep in his bed
Who at the bridge would be first to fall,
Who that day would be lying dead,
Pierced by a British musket-ball.

You know the rest. In the books you have read,
How the British Regulars fired and fled, —

How the farmers gave them ball for ball,
From behind each fence and farm-yard wall,
Chasing the red-coats down the lane,
Then crossing the fields to emerge again
Under the trees at the turn of the road,
And only pausing to fire and load.

So through the night rode Paul Revere ;
And so through the night went his cry of alarm
To every Middlesex village and farm, —
A cry of defiance and not of fear,
A voice in the darkness; a knock at the door,
And a word that shall echo forevermore !
For, borne on the night-wind of the Past,
Through all our history, to the last,
In the hour of darkness and peril and need,
The people will waken and listen to hear
The hurrying hoof-beats of that steed,
And the midnight message of Paul Revere.

THE SONG OF HIAWATHA.

THIS poem, in Mr. Longfellow's words, "is founded on a tradition prevalent among the North American Indians, of a personage of miraculous birth, who was sent among them to clear their rivers, forests, and fishing-grounds, and to teach them the art of peace." He was known by different names among different tribes, one of the names being Hiawatha. "The scene of the poem is among the Ojibways, on the southern shore of

Lake Superior, in the region between the pictured rocks and the Grand Sable." The poem is in twenty-two parts, three of them being here given. The first relates the story of his birth and childhood. The Indian names in the poem have usually the translation given into English in the same or the next line, as —

"On the Muskoday, the meadow ;"

"Of the West-Wind, Mudjekeewis ;"

"By the shores of Gitche Gumee,
By the shining Big-Sea-Water ;"

where Muskoday is Indian for meadow, Mudjekeewis for the West-Wind, and Gitche Gumee is translated by Big-Sea-Water.

HIAWATHA'S CHILDHOOD.

DOWNWARD through the evening twilight,
In the days that are forgotten,
In the unremembered ages,
From the full moon fell Nokomis,¹
Fell the beautiful Nokomis,
She a wife, but not a mother.

She was sporting with her women
Swinging in a swing of grape-vines,
When her rival, the rejected,
Full of jealousy and hatred,
Cut the leafy swing asunder,
Cut in twain the twisted grape-vines,
And Nokomis fell affrighted
Downward through the evening twilight,
On the Muskoday, the meadow,

¹ Indian for grandmother.

On the prairie full of blossoms.

"See ! a star falls !" said the people ;

"From the sky a star is falling !"

There among the ferns and mosses,

There among the prairie lilies,

On the Muskoday, the meadow,

In the moonlight and the starlight,

Fair Nokomis bore a daughter.

And she called her name Wenonah,

As the first-born of her daughters.

And the daughter of Nokomis

Grew up like the prairie lilies,

Grew a tall and slender maiden,

With the beauty of the moonlight,

With the beauty of the starlight.

And Nokomis warned her often,

Saying oft, and oft repeating,

"O, beware of Mudjekeewis ;

Of the West-Wind, Mudjekeewis ;

Listen not to what he tells you ;

Lie not down upon the meadow,

Stoop not down among the lilies,

Lest the West-Wind come and harm you !"

But she heeded not the warning,

Heeded not those words of wisdom,

And the West-Wind came at evening,

Walking lightly o'er the prairie,

Whispering to the leaves and blossoms,

Bending low the flowers and grasses,

Found the beautiful Wenonah,

Lying there among the lilies,

Woody her with his words of sweetness,

Woody her with his soft caresses,
Till she bore a son in sorrow,
Bore a son of love and sorrow.

Thus was born my Hiawatha,
Thus was born the child of wonder ;
But the daughter of Nokomis,
Hiawatha's gentle mother,
In her anguish died deserted
By the West-Wind, false and faithless,
By the heartless Mudjekeewis.

For her daughter, long and loudly
Wailed and wept the sad Nokomis ;
"O that I were dead !" she murmured,
"O that I were dead, as thou art !
No more work, and no more weeping,
Wahonowin ! Wahonowin !" ¹

By the shores of Gitche Gumees,²
By the shining Big-Sea-Water,
Stood the wigwam of Nokomis,
Daughter of the Moon, Nokomis.
Dark behind it rose the forest,
Rose the black and gloomy pine-trees,
Rose the firs with cones upon them ;
Bright before it beat the water,
Beat the clear and sunny water,
Beat the shining Big-Sea-Water.

There the wrinkled, old Nokomis
Nursed the little Hiawatha,³
Rocked him in his linden cradle,

¹ A cry of lamentation.

² Big-Sea-Water, our Lake Superior.

³ Hiawatha means the Wise Man.

Bedded soft in moss and rushes,
Safely bound with reindeer sinews ;
Stilled his fretful wail by saying,
“ Hush ! the Naked Bear will hear thee ! ”
Lulled him into slumber, singing,
“ Ewa-yea ! ¹ my little owlet !
Who is this, that lights the wigwam ?
With his great eyes lights the wigwam ?
Ewa-yea ! my little owlet ! ”

Many things Nokomis taught him
Of the stars that shine in heaven ;
Showed him Ishkoodah, the comet,
Ishkoodah, with fiery tresses ;
Showed the Death-Dance of the spirits,
Warriors with their plumes and war-clubs,
Flaring far away to northward
In the frosty nights of Winter ; ²
Showed the broad, white road in heaven,
Pathway of the ghosts, the shadows,
Running straight across the heavens,
Crowded with the ghosts, the shadows. ³

At the door on summer evenings
Sat the little Hiawatha ;
Heard the whispering of the pine-trees,
Heard the lapping of the water,
Sounds of music, words of wonder ;
“ Minne-wawa ! ” ⁴ said the pine-trees,
“ Mudway-aushka ! ” ⁵ said the water.

¹ Lullaby.

² The Northern Lights.

³ The Milky Way.

⁴ A pleasant sound, as of the wind in the trees.

⁵ Sound of waves on a shore.

Saw the fire-fly, Wah-wah-taysee,
Flitting through the dusk of evening,
With the twinkle of its candle
Lighting up the brakes and bushes,
And he sang the song of children,
Sang the song Nokomis taught him :
“Wah-wah-taysee, little fire-fly,
Little, flitting, white-fire insect,
Little, dancing, white-fire creature,
Light me with your little candle,
Ere upon my bed I lay me,
Ere in sleep I close my eyelids !”

Saw the moon rise from the water
Rippling, rounding from the water,
Saw the flecks and shadows on it,
Whispered, “What is that, Nokomis ?”
And the good Nokomis answered :
“Once a warrior, very angry,
Seized his grandmother, and threw her
Up into the sky at midnight ;
Right against the moon he threw her ;
’T is her body that you see there.”

Saw the rainbow in the heaven,
In the eastern sky, the rainbow,
Whispered, “What is that, Nokomis ?”
And the good Nokomis answered :
“’T is the heaven of flowers you see there ;
All the wild-flowers of the forest,
All the lilies of the prairie,
When on earth they fade and perish,
Blossom in that heaven above us.”

When he heard the owls at midnight,

Hooting, laughing in the forest,
"What is that?" he cried in terror;
"What is that?" he said, "Nokomis?"
And the good Nokomis answered:
"That is but the owl and owllet,
Talking in their native language,
Talking, scolding at each other."

Then the little Hiawatha
Learned of every bird its language,
Learned their names and all their secrets,
How they built their nests in Summer,
Where they hid themselves in Winter,
Talked with them whene'er he met them,
Called them "Hiawatha's Chickens."

Of all beasts he learned the language,
Learned their names and all their secrets,
How the beavers built their lodges,
Where the squirrels hid their acorns,
How the reindeer ran so swiftly,
Why the rabbit was so timid,
Talked with them whene'er he met them,
Called them "Hiawatha's Brothers."

Then Iagoo, the great boaster,
He the marvellous story-teller,
He the traveller and the talker,
He the friend of old Nokomis,
Made a bow for Hiawatha;
From a branch of ash he made it,
From an oak-bough made the arrows,
Tipped with flint, and winged with feathers,
And the cord he made of deer-skin.

Then he said to Hiawatha:

“Go, my son, into the forest,
Where the red deer herd together,
Kill for us a famous roebuck,
Kill for us a deer with antlers !”

Forth into the forest straightway
All alone walked Hiawatha
Proudly, with his bow and arrows ;
And the birds sang round him, o'er him.
“Do not shoot us, Hiawatha !”

Sang the robin, the Opechee,
Sang the bluebird, the Owaissa,

“Do not shoot us, Hiawatha !”

Up the oak-tree, close beside him,
Sprang the squirrel, Adjidaumo,
In and out among the branches,
Coughed and chattered from the oak-tree,
Laughed, and said between his laughing,
“Do not shoot me, Hiawatha !”

And the rabbit from his pathway
Leaped aside, and at a distance
Sat erect upon his haunches,
Half in fear and half in frolic,
Saying to the little hunter,
“Do not shoot me, Hiawatha !”

But he heeded not, nor heard them,
For his thoughts were with the red deer ;
On their tracks his eyes were fastened,
Leading downward to the river,
To the ford across the river,
And as one in slumber walked he.

Hidden in the alder-bushes,
There he waited till the deer came,

Till he saw two antlers lifted,
Saw two eyes look from the thicket,
Saw two nostrils point to windward,
And a deer came down the pathway,
Flecked with leafy light and shadow.
And his heart within him fluttered,
Trembled like the leaves above him,
Like the birch-leaf palpitated,
As the deer came down the pathway.

Then, upon one knee uprising,
Hiawatha aimed an arrow ;
Scarce a twig moved with his motion,
Scarce a leaf was stirred or rustled,
But the wary roebuck started,
Stamped with all his hoofs together,
Listened with one foot uplifted,
Leaped as if to meet the arrow ;
Ah ! the singing, fatal arrow,
Like a wasp it buzzed and stung him !

Dead he lay there in the forest,
By the ford across the river ;
Beat his timid heart no longer,
But the heart of Hiawatha
Throbbled and shouted and exulted,
As he bore the red deer homeward,
And Iagoo and Nokomis
Hailed his coming with applauses.

From the red deer's hide Nokomis
Made a cloak for Hiawatha,
From the red deer's flesh Nokomis
Made a banquet in his honor.
All the village came and feasted,

All the guests praised Hiawatha,
Called him Strong-Heart, Soan-ge-taha !
Called him Loon-Heart, Mahn-go-taysee !

HIAWATHA'S SAILING.

"GIVE me of your bark, O Birch-Tree !
Of your yellow bark, O Birch-Tree !
Growing by the rushing river,
Tall and stately in the valley !
I a light canoe will build me,
Build a swift Cheemaun¹ for sailing,
That shall float upon the river,
Like a yellow leaf in Autumn,
Like a yellow water-lily !

"Lay aside your cloak, O Birch-Tree !
Lay aside your white-skin wrapper,
For the Summer-time is coming,
And the sun is warm in heaven,
And you need no white-skin wrapper !"

Thus aloud cried Hiawatha
In the solitary forest,
By the rushing Taquamenaw,
When the birds were singing gayly,
In the Moon of Leaves² were singing,
And the sun, from sleep awaking,
Started up and said, "Behold me !
Geezis, the great Sun, behold me !"

¹ A birch canoe.

² In May, the month when the leaves come out. The Indians reckon by moons, and our word month is itself formed from moon.

And the tree with all its branches
Rustled in the breeze of morning,
Saying, with a sigh of patience,
"Take my cloak, O Hiawatha!"

With his knife the tree he girdled;
Just beneath its lowest branches,
Just above the roots, he cut it,
Till the sap came oozing outward;
Down the trunk, from top to bottom,
Sheer he cleft the bark asunder,
With a wooden wedge he raised it,
Stripped it from the trunk unbroken.

"Give me of your boughs, O Cedar!
Of your strong and pliant branches,
My canoe to make more steady,
Make more strong and firm beneath me!"

Through the summit of the Cedar
Went a sound, a cry of horror,
Went a murmur of resistance;
But it whispered, bending downward,
"Take my boughs, O Hiawatha!"

Down he hewed the boughs of cedar,
Shaped them straightway to a framework,
Like two bows he formed and shaped them,
Like two bended bows together.

"Give me of your roots, O Tamarack!
Of your fibrous roots, O Larch-Tree!
My canoe to bind together,
So to bind the ends together
That the water may not enter,
That the river may not wet me!"

And the Larch, with all its fibres,
Shivered in the air of morning,
Touched his forehead with its tassels,
Said, with one long sigh of sorrow,
"Take them all, O Hiawatha!"

From the earth he tore the fibres,
Tore the tough roots of the Larch-Tree,
Closely sewed the bark together,
Bound it closely to the framework.

"Give me of your balm, O Fir-Tree!
Of your balsam and your resin,
So to close the seams together
That the water may not enter,
That the river may not wet me!"

And the Fir-Tree, tall and sombre,
Sobbed through all its robes of darkness,
Rattled like a shore with pebbles,
Answered wailing, answered weeping,
"Take my balm, O Hiawatha!"

And he took the tears of balsam,
Took the resin of the Fir-Tree,
Smeared therewith each seam and fissure,
Made each crevice safe from water.

"Give me of your quills, O Hedgehog!
All your quills, O Kagh, the Hedgehog!
I will make a necklace of them,
Make a girdle for my beauty,
And two stars to deck her bosom!"

From a hollow tree the Hedgehog
With his sleepy eyes looked at him,
Shot his shining quills, like arrows,
Saying, with a drowsy murmur,

Through the tangle of his whiskers,
"Take my quills, O Hiawatha!"

From the ground the quills he gathered,
All the little shining arrows,
Stained them red and blue and yellow,
With the juice of roots and berries ;
Into his canoe he wrought them,
Round its waist a shining girdle,
Round its bows a gleaming necklace,
On its breast two stars resplendent.

Thus the Birch Canoe was builded
In the valley, by the river,
In the bosom of the forest ;
And the forest's life was in it,
All its mystery and its magic,
All the lightness of the birch-tree,
All the toughness of the cedar,
All the larch's supple sinews ;
And it floated on the river
Like a yellow leaf in Autumn,
Like a yellow water-lily.

Paddles none had Hiawatha,
Paddles none he had or needed,
For his thoughts as paddles served him,
And his wishes served to guide him ;
Swift or slow at will he glided,
Veered to right or left at pleasure.

Then he called aloud to Kwasind,¹
To his friend, the strong man, Kwasind,
Saying, "Help me clear this river
Of its sunken logs and sand-bars."

¹ Kwasind is the Strong Man.

Straight into the river Kwasind
Plunged as if he were an otter,
Dived as if he were a beaver,
Stood up to his waist in water,
To his arm-pits in the river,
Swam and shouted in the river,
Tugged at sunken logs and branches,
With his hands he scooped the sand-bars,
With his feet the ooze and tangle.

And thus sailed my Hiawatha
Down the rushing Taquamenaw,
Sailed through all its bends and windings,
Sailed through all its deeps and shallows,
While his friend, the strong man, Kwasind,
Swam the deeps, the shallows waded.

Up and down the river went they,
In and out among its islands,
Cleared its bed of root and sand-bar,
Dragged the dead trees from its channel,
Made its passage safe and certain,
Made a pathway for the people,
From its springs among the mountains,
To the waters of Pauwating,²
To the bay of Taquamenaw.

HIAWATHA'S FISHING.

FORTH upon the Gitche Gumee,
On the shining Big-Sea-Water,
With his fishing-line of cedar,
Of the twisted bark of cedar,
Forth to catch the sturgeon Nahma,

¹ Known now as the Saut Sainte Marie.

Mishe-Nahma,¹ King of Fishes,
In his birch canoe exulting
All alone went Hiawatha.

Through the clear, transparent water
He could see the fishes swimming
Far down in the depths below him ;
See the yellow perch, the Sahwa,
Like a sunbeam in the water,
See the Shawgashee, the craw-fish,
Like a spider on the bottom,
On the white and sandy bottom.

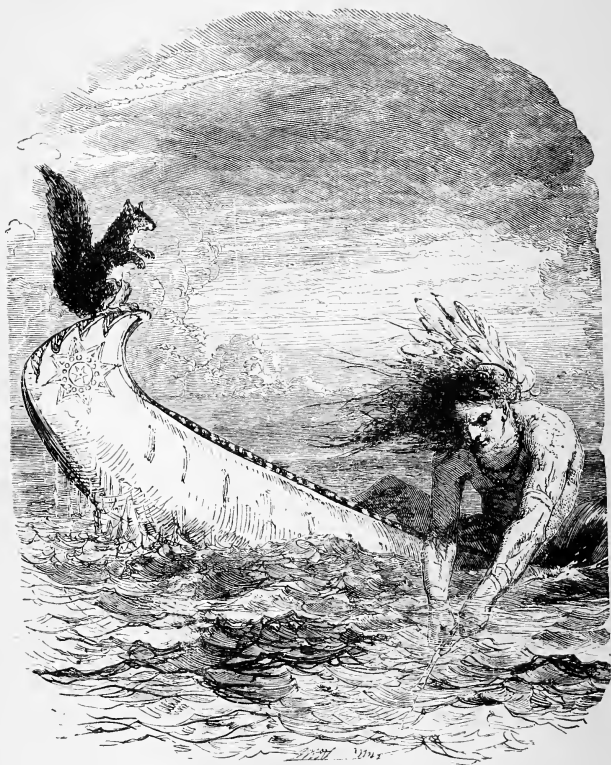
At the stern sat Hiawatha,
With his fishing-line of cedar ;
In his plumes the breeze of morning
Played as in the hemlock branches ;
On the bows, with tail erected,
Sat the squirrel, Adjidaumo ;
In his fur the breeze of morning
Played as in the prairie grasses.

On the white sand of the bottom
Lay the monster Mishe-Nahma,
Lay the sturgeon, King of Fishes ;
Through his gills he breathed the water,
With his fins he fanned and winnowed,
With his tail he swept the sand-floor.

There he lay in all his armor ;
On each side a shield to guard him,
Plates of bone upon his forehead,
Down his sides and back and shoulders
Plates of bone with spines projecting !
Painted was he with his war-paints,

¹ The great sturgeon.





“ And as he drew it in, it tugged so
That the birch canoe stood endwise.”

Hiawatha Fishing.

Stripes of yellow, red, and azure,
Spots of brown and spots of sable ;
And he lay there on the bottom,
Fanning with his fins of purple,
As above him Hiawatha
In his birch canoe came sailing,
With his fishing-line of cedar.

“Take my bait,” cried Hiawatha,
Down into the depths beneath him,
“Take my bait, O Sturgeon, Nahma !
Come up from below the water,
Let us see which is the stronger !”
And he dropped his line of cedar
Through the clear, transparent water,
Waited vainly for an answer,
Long sat waiting for an answer,
And repeating loud and louder,
“Take my bait, O King of Fishes !”

Quiet lay the sturgeon, Nahma,
Fanning slowly in the water,
Looking up at Hiawatha,
Listening to his call and clamor,
His unnecessary tumult,
Till he wearied of the shouting ;
And he said to the Kenozha,
To the pike, the Maskenozha,
“Take the bait of this rude fellow,
Break the line of Hiawatha !”

In his fingers Hiawatha
Felt the loose line jerk and tighten ;
As he drew it in, it tugged so
That the birch canoe stood endwise,

Like a birch log in the water,
With the squirrel, Adjidaumo,
Perched and frisking on the summit.

Full of scorn was Hiawatha
When he saw the fish rise upward,
Saw the pike, the Maskenozha,
Coming nearer, nearer to him,
And he shouted through the water,
"Esa! esa! shame upon you!
You are but the pike, Kenozha,
You are not the fish I wanted,
You are not the King of Fishes!"

Reeling downward to the bottom
Sank the pike in great confusion,
And the mighty sturgeon, Nahma,
Said to Ugudwash, the sun-fish,
To the bream, with scales of crimson,
"Take the bait of this great boaster,
Break the line of Hiawatha!"

Slowly upward, wavering, gleaming,
Rose the Ugudwash, the sun-fish,
Seized the line of Hiawatha,
Swung with all his weight upon it,
Made a whirlpool in the water,
Whirled the birch canoe in circles,
Round and round in gurgling eddies,
Till the circles in the water
Reached the far-off sandy beaches,
Till the water-flags and rushes
Nodded on the distant margins.

But when Hiawatha saw him
Slowly rising through the water,

Lifting up his disk refulgent,
 Loud he shouted in derision,
 "Esa! esa! shame upon you!
 You are Ugudwash, the sun-fish,
 You are not the fish I wanted,
 You are not the King of Fishes!"

Slowly downward, wavering, gleaming,
 Sank the Ugudwash, the sun-fish,
 And again the sturgeon, Nahma,
 Heard the shout of Hiawatha,
 Heard his challenge of defiance,
 The unnecessary tumult,
 Ringing far across the water.

From the white sand of the bottom
 Up he rose with angry gesture,
 Quivering in each nerve and fibre,
 Clashing all his plates of armor,
 Gleaming bright with all his war-paint;
 In his wrath he darted upward,
 Flashing leaped into the sunshine,
 Opened his great jaws, and swallowed
 Both canoe and Hiawatha.

Down into that darksome cavern
 Plunged the headlong Hiawatha,
 As a log on some black river
 Shoots and plunges down the rapids,
 Found himself in utter darkness,
 Groped about in helpless wonder,
 Till he felt a great heart beating,
 Throbbing in that utter darkness.

And he smote it in his anger,
 With his fist, the heart of Nahma,

Felt the mighty King of Fishes
Shudder through each nerve and fibre,
Heard the water gurgle round him
As he leaped and staggered through it,
Sick at heart, and faint and weary.

Crosswise then did Hiawatha
Drag his birch canoe for safety,
Lest from out the jaws of Nahma,
In the turmoil and confusion,
Forth he might be hurled and perish.
And the squirrel, Adjidaumo,
Frisked and chattered very gayly,
Toiled and tugged with Hiawatha
Till the labor was completed.

Then said Hiawatha to him,
"O my little friend, the squirrel,
Bravely have you toiled to help me ;
Take the thanks of Hiawatha,
And the name which now he gives you ;
For hereafter and forever
Boys shall call you Adjidaumo,
Tail-in-air the boys shall call you !"

And again the sturgeon, Nahma,
Gasped and quivered in the water,
Then was still, and drifted landward
Till he grated on the pebbles,
Till the listening Hiawatha
Heard him grate upon the margin,
Felt him strand upon the pebbles,
Knew that Nahma, King of Fishes,
Lay there dead upon the margin.

Then he heard a clang and flapping,

As of many wings assembling,
 Heard a screaming and confusion,
 As of birds of prey contending,
 Saw a gleam of light above him,
 Shining through the ribs of Nahma,
 Saw the glittering eyes of sea-gulls,
 Of Kayoshk, the sea-gulls, peering,
 Gazing at him through the opening,
 Heard them saying to each other,
 " 'T is our brother, Hiawatha ! "

And he shouted from below them,
 Cried exulting from the caverns :
 " O ye sea-gulls ! O my brothers !
 I have slain the sturgeon, Nahma ;
 Make the rifts a little larger,
 With your claws the openings widen,
 Set me free from this dark prison,
 And henceforward and forever
 Men shall speak of your achievements,
 Calling you Kayoshk, the sea-gulls,
 Yes, Kayoshk, the Noble Scratchers ! "

And the wild and clamorous sea-gulls
 Toiled with beak and claws together,
 Made the rifts and openings wider
 In the mighty ribs of Nahma,
 And from peril and from prison,
 From the body of the sturgeon,
 From the peril of the water,
 They released my Hiawatha.

He was standing near his wigwam,
 On the margin of the water,
 And he called to old Nokomis,

Called and beckoned to Nokomis,
Pointed to the sturgeon, Nahma,
Lying lifeless on the pebbles,
With the sea-gulls feeding on him.
“ I have slain the Mishe-Nahma,
Slain the King of Fishes ! ” said he ;
“ Look ! the sea-gulls feed upon him,
Yes, my friends Kayoshk, the sea-gulls ;
Drive them not away, Nokomis,
They have saved me from great peril
In the body of the sturgeon,
Wait until their meal is ended,
Till their craws are full with feasting,
Till they homeward fly, at sunset,
To their nests among the marshes ;
Then bring all your pots and kettles,
And make oil for us in Winter.”

And she waited till the sun set,
Till the pallid moon, the Night-sun,
Rose above the tranquil water,
Till Kayoshk, the sated sea-gulls,
From their banquet rose with clamor,
And across the fiery sunset
Winged their way to far-off islands,
To their nests among the rushes.

To his sleep went Hiawatha,
And Nokomis to her labor,
Toiling patient in the moonlight,
Till the sun and moon changed places,
Till the sky was red with sunrise,
And Kayoshk, the hungry sea-gulls,
Came back from the reedy islands,
Clamorous for their morning banquet.

Three whole days and nights alternate
Old Nokomis and the sea-gulls
Stripped the oily flesh of Nahma,
Till the waves washed through the rib-bones,
Till the sea-gulls came no longer,
And upon the sands lay nothing
But the skeleton of Nahma.

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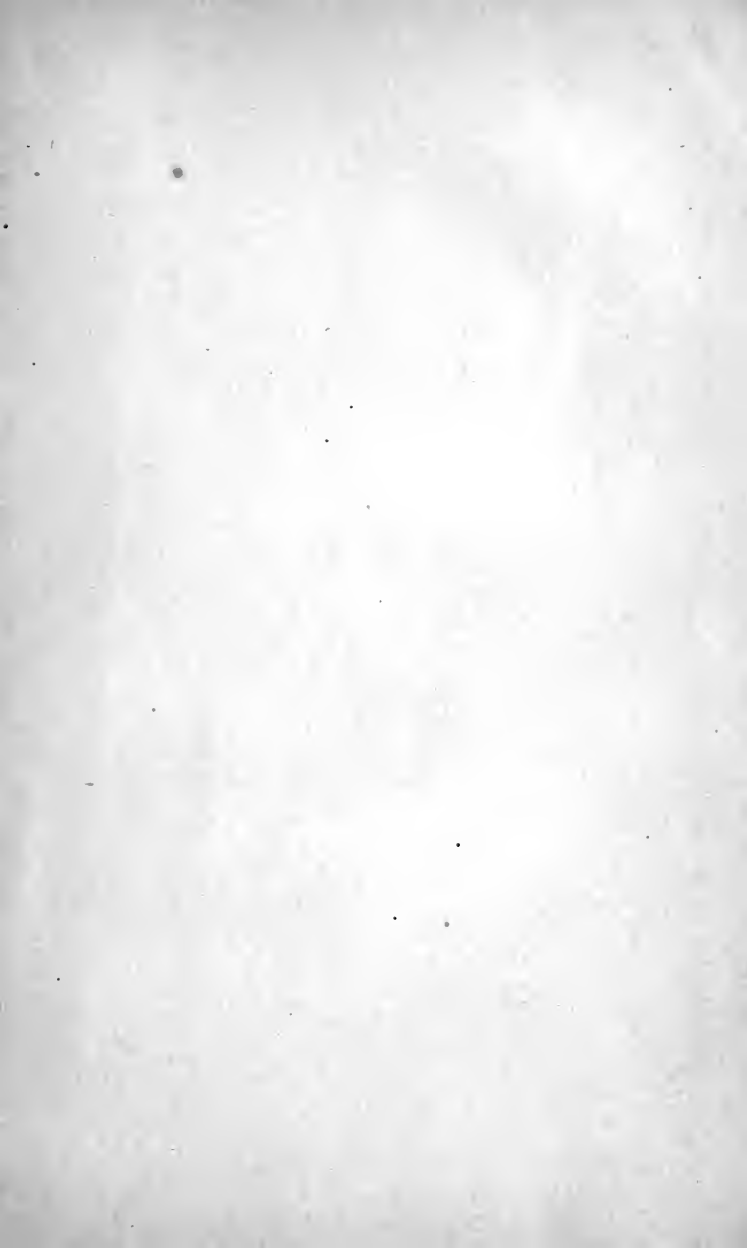
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